



Market Bulletin

Mike Strain DVM, Commissioner



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March 25, 2010

Louisiana sweet potato farmers are hoping the new ConAgra Foods Lamb Weston plant near Delhi will mean a sweet deal.



By Sam Irwin

The new ConAgra Foods Lamb Weston sweet potato processing plant near Delhi, Richland Parish, is under construction and should be online in time for the 2010 sweet potato harvest, said Plant Manager Doug Beyer.

Beyer hosted area sweet potato farmers, state and Delhi city officials and media on “hard-hat” tours of the facility on March 10 and 11. The visitors were ferried from the Delhi Civic Center to the construction site via van and driven around the industrial plant site located off the I-20 Dunn exit.

“It’s a very large plant,” Beyer said. “It’s meant to operate 24 hours a day.”

Visitors saw numerous cranes erecting large concrete walls for the main plant. Beyer added that the wastewater digester unit is nearly complete.

The digester will employ a methane-gathering system while recycling much of the high volume of water used by the facility. The recycled bio-gas will be blended with natural gas to heat the plant.

Beyer stressed that plant construction and operation will meet the gold standard of the Leadership in Energy and

Environmental Design (LEED) for environmentally sustainable construction, which includes the use of recycled building materials as well as recyclable disposable construction materials.

Beyer said seven years of buying sweet potatoes from



Doug Beyer

Louisiana growers and shipping them to Washington for processing has proven that the sweet potato French fry market is expanding.

Several area sweet potato farmers attended the March 11 hard-hat tour.

Ken and Robin Thornhill of Thornhill Farms in Wisner were very encouraged by the possibili-

ty of a new market for their sweet potatoes. The Thornhills farm about 800 acres of sweet potatoes.

“If we can improve our yields, and I think we can, this will be a new market for us,” Ken Thornhill said. “Typically, we grow for the fresh market and the fresh market doesn’t readily take a jumbo oversized sweet potato. This plant will be just the opposite. They will take the jumbos.”

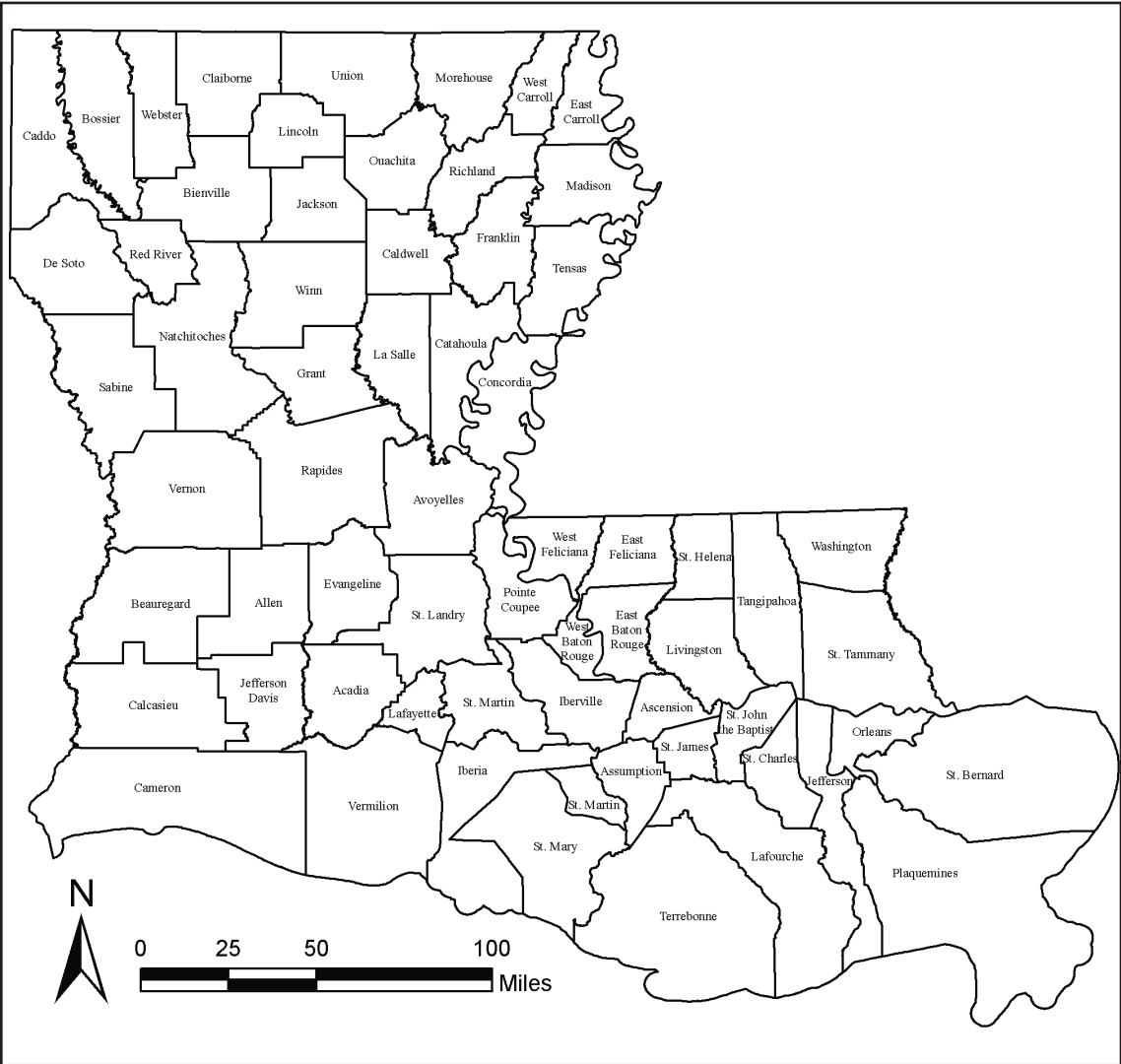
“There have been years when I’ve dumped as many as 50,000 bushels of jumbo sweet potatoes because we had no market but this plant means the rules have changed. It also gives sweet potato farmers a shot in the arm as far as borrowing power at the bank.”

Thornhill said one possible way to increase yield would be to extend the sweet potato growing season, resulting in larger potatoes.

Artie Boutwell and Ricky Holland of Oak Grove Produce in Oak Grove were also encouraged by the new market the Delhi plant will create.

“It’s going to be a learning process,” Boutwell said. “It will be some different growing techniques to learn, but the new plant *See Delhi, continued on page 5*

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Prices represent averages per hundred weight
Prices for week ending 03/12/10
CATTLE PRICES FROM PRESENT AND PAST

	This Week	Last Year	Five Years Ago
Slaughter Cows Utility	\$51.35	\$44.70	\$54.85
Feeder Steers 400-500 lbs.	\$118.30	\$106.00	\$130.50
Feeder Heifers 400-500 lbs.	\$102.25	\$93.00	\$123.00

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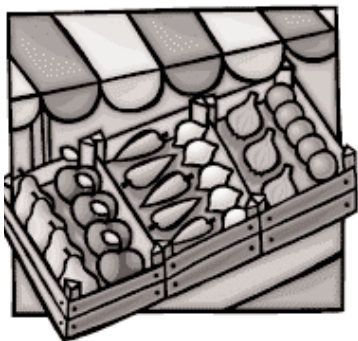
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Visit your local farmers market

AVOYELLES PARISH

Moreauville

WestMar Farms Dairy Market
851 Couvillion Street
Thurs. 2-6 p.m.

BEAUREGARD PARISH

Ragley

Ragley Farmers Market
Ragley Historical Square,
Hwy. 12
Sat. 8 a.m.- 1 p.m., during peak
growing season

CADDO PARISH

Greenwood

Greenwood Farmers Market
Located in the William Peters
Town Park
Starting Saturday, May 2, 2009
Every Sat. 8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Shreveport

Shreveport/Bossier Farmers
Market
river front at Festival Plaza
Wed. & Sat. 7:00 - 11:30 a.m.
June 3-Aug. 26
Oct. 21-Nov. 18, Sat. only

CALCASIEU PARISH

Lake Charles

Charlestown Farmers Market
1001 Ryan Street
Sat. 7 a.m. - noon, year round

Moss Bluff

MB Farmers & Crafters
Market
Sam Houston Jones Pkwy.
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon,
April-Oct.

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

Baton Rouge

Red Stick Farmers Market #1
Fifth St. near Main St.
Sat. 8 a.m.- noon, Jan.-Dec.

Baton Rouge

Red Stick Farmers Market #2
8470 Goodwood Blvd.
Unitarian Church Parking Lot
Tues. 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Jan. - July & Sept. - Dec.

Baton Rouge

Red Stick Farmers Market #3
7248 Perkins Road
Thursdays 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.,
Year round

Zachary

Zachary Famers Market
1650 Mt. Pleasant Road
2nd and 4th Saturdays begin-
ning
8 a.m.- 12 p.m.

EVANGELINE PARISH

Ville Platte

Ville Platte Farmers Market
11 East Main Street
Late June to end of produce
Fri. 5 p.m.-7 p.m.
Oct. to end of produce
Fri. 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

IBERIA PARISH

New Iberia

Teche Area Farmers Market
Bouligny Plaza
Tues. 3-6 p.m., Sat. 6-10 a.m.
year round

JEFFERSON PARISH

Gretna

Gretna Farmers Market
300 Huey P. Long Ave.
Sat. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., all
year

Westwego

Westwego Farmers & Fisheries
484 Sala Ave., corner of 4th
Street
Tues 3-7 p.m. & Sat. 8:30
a.m.-2 p.m.
Year round

JEFFERSON DAVIS PARISH

Jennings

Main Street Farmers Market
Founder's Park
Sat. 7 a.m. - 10 a.m.,
May - Nov.

LAFAYETTE PARISH

Lafayette

Acadiana Farmers Market
801 Foreman Dr. & Dulles St.
Tues., Thurs. & Sat. 5 - 10 a.m.
Jan. - Dec.

Lafayette

City Garden Market
Heymann Blvd., Oil Center

Sat. 8 a.m. - noon, year round

LAFOURCHE PARISH

Thibodaux

Thibodaux Main Street Market
314 St. Mary St. at Jean Lafitte
National Historic Park
Sat. 7 - 11 a.m.

LINCOLN PARISH

Ruston

Ruston Farmer's Market
Railroad Ave at Monroe Street
Sat. 7:30 a.m.- Noon, March-
November

LIVINGSTON PARISH

Denham Springs

Livingston Farmers Market
New Covenant Church parking
lot on Hwy. 190
Sat. 7 a.m. - noon, year round

MADISON PARISH

Tallulah

Tallulah Farmers Market
408 N. Cedar St., Hwy. 65
Tues., Thurs. & Sat.
8 a.m. - noon, May-Aug., Oct.-
Dec.

MOREHOUSE PARISH

Bastrop

Morehouse Parish Farmers
Market
305 E. Madison
Mon.-Sat. 7 a.m.-5p.m., year
round

NATCHITOCHES PARISH

Natchitoches

Cane River Green Market
Downtown Natchitoches river-
bank
Sat. 9 a.m.-1 p.m., April 22-
July 29

ORLEANS PARISH

New Orleans

Crescent City Farmers Market
#1
700 Magazine St.
Sat. 8 a.m.-noon, year round

New Orleans

Crescent City Farmers Market
#2
Uptown Square, 200 Broadway
Tues. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., year
round

New Orleans

Mid-City Green Market

3700 Orleans Ave.
Thurs., 3-7 p.m.
Year Round

New Orleans

Upper Ninth Ward Farmers
Market
3500 St. Claude Ave.
Sat. 1-4 p.m., year round

OUACHITA PARISH

Monroe

Monroe Farmers Market
1212 Washington St.
Mon. - Sat. 6 a.m. - 1 p.m.,
June-Aug.

West Monroe

West Monroe Farmers Market
1700 North 7th St.
Mon. - Sat. 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.,
year round

ST. CHARLES PARISH

Destrehan

German Coast Farmers Market
#1
Parking lot of Ormond
Plantation
Sat. 8 a.m. - noon, year round

Luling

German Coast Farmers Market
#2
12715 Hwy. (St. Charles Plaza
Wed. 3-6:30 p.m.
Year round

ST. LANDRY PARISH

Opelousas

St. Landry Farmers Market
952 East Landry St., Hwy. 190
Tues., Thurs. & Sat. 6-10 a.m.
Tues & Friday, 5-7 p.m.
May-Dec.

ST. MARTIN PARISH

St. Martinville

St. Martinville Creole Market
Evangeline Blvd. & Main St.
Sat. 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., May-
Dec.

ST. TAMMANY PARISH

Covington

Covington Farmers Market #1
City Hall, 609 North Columbia
Sat. 9 a.m.-1 p.m.,
Year round

Covington

Covington Farmers Market #2

419 North New Hampshire
Wed. 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Year round

Folsom

Folsom Community Farmers
Market
Railroad Avenue
Every third Sat. starting March
20 through Nov. 20, 2010
9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Mandeville

Mandeville Trailhead Comm.
Market
675 Lafitte St.
Sat. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Year round

Slidell

Camellia City Farms Market
Griffith Park
Sat. 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
Year round

TERREBONNE PARISH

Houma

Cajun Farmers Market of
Houma - Terrebonne
Tunnel Blvd. & Naquin St.
Mon.-Sat. 6 a.m.-6 p.m., year
round

WASHINGTON PARISH

Bogalusa

Bogalusa Farmers Market
500 Block of Columbia St.
Sat., 9 a.m.-noon, Jun. - Aug.

WEST FELICIANA PARISH

St. Francisville

St. Francisville Farmers Market
agricultural pavilion (4-H
Barn)
Thurs. 1-5 p.m.
mid-May to mid-Nov.

WINN PARISH

Winnfield

Winn Farmers Market
301 West Main & St. John St.
Tues. & Fri. 7:30 - 11 a.m.
May-Aug.

OUT OF STATE

Vicksburg

Vicksburg Farmers' Market
Corner of Grove and Levee
Streets in downtown Vicksburg
Each Saturday in June, July
and August, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Louisiana Agriculture & Forestry Today

Strain: SGSF launches new Web site

Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., said the Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF) has debuted its new Web site at www.southernforests.org.

"The Southern Group of State Foresters is letting the public know about forestry and the multi-billion dollar forest industry in the 13 southern states and two federal territories that comprise the SGSF," Strain said.

"This is not just a complete redesign," said SGSF Chairman

and State Forester of Virginia Carl E. Garrison III. "The new site has more up-to-date information about the state of forestry in the South, and it's much more intuitive so that visitors to the site can find information more easily."

Louisiana State Forester Wade Dubea said the South is recognized as America's wood basket with more privately owned forestland (nearly 200 million acres) than anywhere in the country. The region stretches from Texas to Virginia; Oklahoma to the U.S.

Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

"Forestry is an integral part of Louisiana's economy," Dubea said.

"There are a lot of forestry facts that would surprise most Americans," Garrison said. "For example, the forest products industry in the South generates more than \$200 billion a year in sales.

"Also, the Western United States gets the bulk of the news coverage regarding wildland fires, but there are more wildland fires each year in the Southern U.S. than anywhere in the nation. The South

loses an average of 35,000 acres of timberland annually to wildfire. These are but a couple of the items of interest found in the new SGSF Web site."

In addition to the dollar value of the wood products, the South's forests provide clean water, clean air, moderate the effects of climate change, sequester carbon dioxide, provide wildlife habitat and offer a range of recreational opportunities.

To learn more about forests in the South, visit www.southernforests.org.



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COMMISSIONER

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Mike Strain DVM,
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Kinder Livestock

13008 Hwy 190
West, Kinder
337-738-2778

Mansura Livestock

8745 Hwy 1
Mansura
318-964-5330

Dominique Stockyard

(Baton Rouge Location)
1462 Airline Hwy.
Baton Rouge
225-356-5203

Dominique Stockyard

(Carencro Location)
3600 N. University Ave.
Carencro
337-896-6995

Dominique Stockyard

(Opelousas Location)
2800 W. Landry Street
Opelousas
337-942-5661

Red River Livestock Auction

P. O. Box 456 Hwy 1
Coushatta
318-932-5691

H & H Livestock

4202 Hwy 1
Raceland
985-446-6540

Amite Livestock Co.

58449 Hwy. 51
Amite
985-748-8636

Miller Livestock

100 Sale Barn Road
DeQuincy
337-786-2995

North Tangipahoa Stockyard

(formerly Fairchild
Livestock)

12036 Hwy. 38
Kentwood
985-229-8580

Delhi Livestock Auction

774 Hwy. 80
Delhi
318-878-2394

West Monroe Livestock Auction

5243 Cypress St.
West Monroe
318-396-8445

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Cattle theft and other
agricultural-related crimes?
1-800-558-9741

Forestry related
crimes?
225-925-4500

Visit the Louisiana Market Bulletin online at:
www.LDAF.LA.gov

Audubon Sugar Institute sets short course for May 20-21 in Georgia

The LSU AgCenter's Audubon Sugar Institute will present its annual sugar processing short course May 20-21 in Savannah, Ga.

The event, which this year will feature separation technologies, is being held out of state to follow the annual meeting of Sugar Industry Technologists Inc., which will meet May 16-19 in Savannah.

The LSU AgCenter's two-day practical short course is designed for specialists involved in the areas of sugars, sweeteners, renewable energy, foods, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and water treatment, said Vadim Kochergin, a chemical engineer with the LSU AgCenter's Audubon Sugar Institute.

The sessions will feature instructors from the LSU AgCenter and manufacturing

companies in the United States, France, Germany and South Africa, who will present information on operations and process design related to affinity-based separation technologies using fine-granulated media, Kochergin said.

"Sugars comprise a large portion of various agricultural crops and provide a chemical platform for producing fuels and chemicals from renewable resources," he said. "That is why the short course will have special focus on the challenges of the emerging industry of renewable fuels and chemicals.

"Other sessions will deal with new advances in equipment, media and process design as well as an overview of membrane filtration technology," he added. "The course provides opportuni-

ties to create your own network of experts and industry suppliers and obtain information on all aspects of resin-based processes."

The sessions will be held at the Hilton Savannah DeSoto hotel.

Registration for the two-day event is \$750 with a discounted rate of \$650 for registrations submitted by March 15. LSU students may register for \$250. Companies sending two or more representatives will receive a 15 percent discount, and Louisiana sugar mill personnel will receive a 25 percent discount.

A complete, detailed brochure is available online by going to www.lsuagcenter.com/audubon and clicking on the "education" link. Information also is available by telephone at 225-642-0135, ext. 236, or by e-mail to vkochergin@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Delhi, continued from page 1

will be a plus for us."

Boutwell said the new market might ease the pain of wet years when sweet potatoes rot in the field because of wet, soggy conditions.

"That can be very disheartening as well as costly," he said.

Arkansas sweet potato farmer Ted McDermott and Oklahoma Irish potato farmer Gary Chapman also took the tour.

McDermott said he would probably do business with the Delhi plant but Chapman said he is still researching the possibility of growing sweet potatoes.

Beyer said the sweet potato plant was expected to employ 275 workers and that job fairs will be conducted in the upcoming weeks.

Job fairs are scheduled for March 29 in Delhi, March 30 in Tallulah, March 31 in Monroe,

April 1 in Winnsboro and April 2 in Rayville.

The positions vary from general laborers, technicians, equipment operators and skilled trades personnel. The positions are full-time, year-round jobs.

ConAgra officials expect the plant's work force to expand to 500 as the plant grows.

In the 2009 crop year, 85 Louisiana producers grew 3.9 million bushels of sweet potatoes in 14 parishes. The total gross farm value of the Louisiana crop was \$85 million.

Louisiana currently ranks third nationally in sweet potato production.

For more information, visit the ConAgra Foods Lamb Weston Web site at www.lambweston.com/Delhi/employment.jsp. Enter Delhi, LA, in the keyword search box.

LSU AgCenter releases annual Ag Summary

Louisiana agriculture contributed \$8.3 billion to the state's economy in 2009, which was the lowest contribution since 2002 and down from \$9.5 billion in 2008, according to the latest figures compiled by the LSU AgCenter in its annual Ag Summary, which was released March 15.

In 2002, the contribution was \$7.5 billion, and the high in the intervening years was \$10.9 billion in 2007, said LSU AgCenter economist John Westra, who serves as project director of this annual survey, which has been conducted since 1978.

"Many people don't realize the significance of production agriculture to Louisiana's economy," Westra said. "That was one of the original reasons for starting this annual report more than 30 years ago."

The \$8.3 billion figure is a combination of two numbers – the sale price the farmer gets for the raw commodity, which totaled \$4.9 billion, and the sale price of the next step in the journey from farmer to consumer, called value-added, which was \$3.4 billion.

For example, with sugarcane the \$752 million contribution in 2009 includes the price the farmers received for their cane and the price the mills received for producing raw sugar from the cane.

"Our figures only go to the first stop beyond the farm," Westra said. "The level of value-added varies among the commodities."

The LSU AgCenter also develops a Value of Louisiana Agriculture report, which includes retail, shipping and further processing. That number in 2007 was \$29 billion. A new version reflecting 2008 figures will be available by May 1.

One reason for the lower number in 2009 compared to 2008 was the 25 percent drop in each of the state's two biggest agricultural industries – forestry and poultry, Westra said.

Forestry went from \$3.3 billion to \$2.5 billion, and poultry went from \$1.2 billion down to \$884 million in 2009.

"The recession and the housing market collapse in many regions of the country were the biggest factors that hurt the forestry industry," Westra said.

Two paper mills in the state have closed in the past two years, causing a drop in demand for paper and wood prod-

ucts.

"There's an excess stock of housing available, which has depressed the home construction business and demand for lumber products," Westra said.

Westra doesn't think a rebound for the forestry industry is likely in 2010.

"The housing market won't rebound until unemployment goes down," he said.

The recession is also partly to blame for the poultry industry downturn, Westra said.

Although Foster Farms took over the poultry processing plant in Farmerville closed by Pilgrim's Pride, which left the state over a year ago, Foster Farms is not operating the plant at the level it had been before the sale, Westra said.

The third most valuable commodity in 2009 was sugarcane, which went up 25 percent from 2008.

"The increase was due to higher sugar prices from changes in U.S. sugar policy and decreased production worldwide," Westra said.

The horse industry came in at fourth place with its \$579 million contribution to the economy, which was just about the same as last year, Westra said.

"This industry is bigger than most people realize and has stayed pretty steady from year to year," Westra said, adding that this number doesn't include gambling revenue.

The second most valuable plant commodity was rice at \$519 million. Near-record yields helped the rice industry rebound from flooding and saltwater intrusion problems caused by hurricanes from a few years back.

However, the overall value was down 6 percent from 2008 because of lower prices, Westra said.

Soybeans are next in line for value from row crops, moving up 9 percent in 2009 to \$369 million. Soybeans continue to be the crop that takes up the most land in Louisiana – about a million acres.

"Soybeans are planted on twice as many acres as either sugarcane or rice," Westra said.

Cotton, once the king of row crops in Louisiana, doesn't even make the top 10 list in value to the Louisiana economy.

"Farmers have been getting relatively higher prices from corn and soybeans than from cotton," Westra said.

Beef cattle, which is an industry in every parish but

Orleans, was down slightly – 4 percent – from 2008. The contribution in 2009 to the state's economy was \$365 million.

Ninth place in terms of contribution to the economy were the feed grains at \$363 million. Feed grains – meaning grains fed to livestock – include corn, grain sorghum and oats. Their value was down almost 20 percent from 2008.

"Corn prices went down. There were fewer acres harvested, and yields were down," Westra said, adding that sorghum and oat acreage was down about 50 percent from the year before.

The aquaculture and marine fisheries industries also were down from the year before. Aquaculture includes fish-farming operations, such as crawfish, alligators, oysters and bait minnows, and contributed about \$319 million to the economy. The marine fish industry – which includes products from the sea such as shrimp, blue crabs and menhaden – had a value of \$441 million in 2009.

All together the Ag Summary provides facts on 175 different commodities that are part of the Louisiana agriculture economy.

"Outside of California, we have the most diverse agricultural economy in the country," said Paul Coreil, LSU AgCenter vice chancellor for extension.

The report is compiled each year by parish and regional extension agents in the state.

"The Ag Summary helps us keep track of changes in the agricultural community so we know how to shape our research and extension programs for the most impact," Coreil said.

Many people use the Ag Summary as a source for Louisiana agriculture facts including politicians, the media and other governmental agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"In instances in the past, the USDA has used our figures as a resource for allocation of staff effort in Louisiana," Westra said, adding that such decisions have been made based on the level of commodities produced in various parishes.

The latest Ag Summary is available online. Go to www.lsuagcenter.com/agsummary. Also online are the reports back to 1997.

Coming Your Way

Bird Shows

Exotic bird market vendors wanted for 2010 fairs in Kenner, Baton Rouge, Alexandria, Lake Charles, Monroe, Shreveport and Bossier City areas.

Call now if interested in establishing these bird marts.

For more information, contact W. D. Brown, Morning Star Expositions, at 214-244-0350.

Cattle Sales

20th Annual 2010 La. Bayou Classic Polled/Horned Hereford and Hereford influenced (F1) Sale is scheduled for April 3, 2010 at the Dean Lee Livestock Facilities and Sales Arena in Alexandria.

The Sales is sponsored by the La. Polled Hereford Association in conjunction with the LSU AgCenter.

For more information, contact Ronnie Bardwell, Sales Chairman, at 985-320-8978 or rbardwell@agctr.lsu.edu.

The Louisiana Tech University Farm Production Sale will be held May 1 at the Louisiana Tech Equine Center in Ruston at 1 p.m.

Quarter horses, paints, Brangus, dairy heifers, steers, hogs, goats and lambs will be offered.

For more information, contact Gary Kennedy at 318-257-3275 or visit the Website at www.live-stocksale.latech.edu.

Education and Workshops

Arborist Continuing Education Workshops will be held throughout the year at various locations. A variety of field professionals will be conducting the workshops. The cost is \$85 to pre-register; \$140 after pre-registration deadlines have passed.

For more information, contact Hallie Dozier, 225-578-7219.

Aerial Lift Safety by the North American Training Solutions, Shreveport location to be announced; (seating limited to 50); April 16, 2010; pre-registration deadline, April 2.

Hazard & Danger Tree Cutting & Felling by the North American Training Solutions at Lake D'Arbonne State Park in Farmerville (seating limited to 70); May 7, 2010; pre-registration deadline, April 23.

Bringing Business Your Way by Mark Mayberry at Delgado Community College in New Orleans (seating limited to 100); July 30, 2010; pre-registration

deadline, July 16.

Tree Roots: Structure and Remediation by Dave Leonard, Shreveport location to be announced (seating limited to 50); August 6; pre-registration deadline, August 6.

High Angle & Emergency Response by North American Training Solutions at the LSU AgCenter Hammond Research Center in Hammond (seating limited to 80); Sept. 10; pre-registration deadline, August 27.

Tree Climbing, Fall Protection & Work Positioning by North American Training Solutions at Delgado Community College in New Orleans (seating limited to 100); Oct. 1; pre-registration deadline, Sept. 17.

Tree Detectives by LSU AgCenter at 4-H Camp Grant Walker in Pollock (seating limited to 60); Nov. 12; pre-registration deadline, Oct. 29.

Tree, People and the Law by Victor Merullo at the Holiday Inn South in Baton Rouge (seating limited to 150); Jan. 14, 2011; pre-registration deadline, Dec. 17, 2010.

The Louisiana 4-H Museum Storytelling Program will be held April 3 and 17 at the Louisiana 4-H Museum in Mansura from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The storytelling program is geared for youngsters age 3 on up and will continue on the first and third Saturdays each month.

Programs tie in with 4-H projects, seasons and holidays. Professional Storyteller Rose Anne St. Romaine will host the program.

Children age 10 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Saturday admission to the museum is \$1 per person. The museum will remain open following the storytelling until 2 p.m.

Normal museum hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Admission is \$3 per person, with children under age 3 admitted free. Group tours may be scheduled by calling 318-964-2245 or e-mail at 4hmuseum@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Eucalyptus as a Short Rotation Woody Crop Field Tour will be held March 25 at the LSU AgCenter Rosepine Research Station, 176 Research Station Rd. in Rosepine at 11 a.m.

Tour a large eucalyptus plantation and several research trials near the Louisiana-Texas border. Lunch will be provided.

For more information, contact Michelle Sensing at 903-834-6191, ext. 257 or

amsensing@ag.tamu.edu

Horticultural Events

Second Saturday Plant Sale program will be held April 10, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. at the Parkway Partners Greenhouse, 1137 Baronne St. (corner of Baronne and Clio), New Orleans.

A variety of guest speakers will lecture on horticultural issues.

For more information, call 504-620-2224 or e-mail dgraham@parkwaypartners.org.

21st Anniversary Festival des Fleurs Garden Show and Sale will be held in Lafayette May 8 at Blackham Coliseum, 2330 Johnston Street, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m..

Educational displays by the Bonsai Society and Orchid Societies will be featured and the Lafayette Garden Club will present their judged flower show themed "Islands of the World".

Door prizes will be awarded and children are encouraged to participate in the children's activities.

Admission is \$5.00 (under 12 free) or \$4.00 with a festival ad from the newspaper.

For more information, call 337-482-5339, email welsh@louisiana.edu or go to inhc.louisiana.edu.

The Eighth Annual Baton Rouge Spring Garden Show will be March 27-28 at Parker Coliseum on Highland Road on the LSU campus from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. each day.

The show includes numerous vendors selling a variety of plants and garden-related merchandise, ranging from artwork and furniture to irrigation equipment and unique planters.

Specialty plants and garden products such as pond fish, metal work, garden tools, pots, ornaments and landscaping materials will be available for sale.

March 28 also will feature the Baton Rouge Spring Car Show from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Admission to the show is \$5 for adults, with children 12 and under free.

For more information, call David Himelrick at 225-578-2158.

Southwest Louisiana Beekeeping Association organizational meeting will be held 8 a.m. - noon May 29 at the War Memorial Civic Center in Derrider to create a new bee keeping association for south-west Louisiana.

For more information, contact Keith Hawkins at

khawkins@agcenter.lsu.edu or 337-463-7006.

Horse Shows

Choupique Youth Rodeo Series will be held April 14 at the Choupique Rodeo Arena in Choupique at 6 p.m.

Future dates include April 24; May 1, 15, 22, 29; June 5, 26; July 3, 10, 17, 24; Aug. 7, 14, 21

For more information, call Kelly Kinney at 337-583-4989 or e-mail to kinney@camtel.net.

Acadiana Barrel Racing Association will host a competition April 18 at the SugArena in New Iberia. Books close at 10:45 a.m.

Open, youth, novice barrel classes and open and youth pole bending classes will be available. All classes will be jackpotted.

Future dates include May 2, 15; June 26; Aug. 7, 29; Sept. 4, 19; Oct. 10, 23; Nov. 6-7; Dec. 4-5.

For more information, call Lisa Carpenter at 337-993-3975 or http://www.ebarrelracing.com/or ganizations/abra_la/index.htm.

Extreme Cowboy Race Cajun Style Ultimate Cowboy Showdown Outdoor Course event will be held March 27 at the 24277 Mixon Road in Amite. Six divisions with cash payouts. Admission is \$5 adults, \$3, students.

9 a.m. registration, race starts at 10. Course is open for practice by appointment. Stalls and primitive camping available.

For more information, call Dianne at 985-517-8217 or e-mail at ucs08@yahoo.com or visit www.extremecowboyassociation.com

Winter Buckle Series Barrel Racing April 15 at the Tip Top Arena in Lecompte.

Ag and novice horse classes offered.

Future dates include May 1, 15, 29, June 26, 10, 17, 24, Aug. 7, 21, Sept. 18 and Oct. 2, 9, 23.

For more information call 318-445-8907 or visit www.rivercitiesbarrelracers.com.

Louisiana High School Rodeo Association Avoyelles Parish High School Rodeo will be held at the Backyard Arena March 27-28 in Bunkie.

Future LHRSA dates include April 9-10, Leesville; April 16-17, Shreveport; April 17-18, Keatchie; April 23-24, New Iberia; April 25, New Iberia; May 7-8, Hackberry; May 8-9, DeRidder; Wrangler division finals, June 4-6, Gonzales; High School finals, June 11-19, Gonzales.

For more information, contact Nicky or Stephanie Rodrigue at 337-542-4774, 337-794-2929 or 337-540-4623 or visit www.lhsra.info.

Louisiana High School Rodeo Association Choupique High School will be held at the West Carroll Arena March 26-27 in Sulphur.

For more information, contact Nicky or Stephanie Rodrigue at 337-542-4774, 337-794-2929 or 337-540-4623 or visit www.lhsra.info.

The Livingston Horse Show Association will present a horse show in Denham Springs at the South Park Arena April 3 at 9 a.m.

Halter nad judged and times events will be offered.

A future horse show date is April 17.

For more information, contact DeLois Senez at 225-664-3150 or via Web site at www.livingstonhorseshowassociation.webs.com.

The Louisiana Cutting Horse Association will hold a competition April 17 at the Rice Festival Arena in Crowley at 10 a.m.

Practice begins at 8:30 a.m.

Future dates are May 15, June 12, July 17, Aug. 21, Sept. 18 Oct. 16 and Nov. 13.

For more information, call Mary Kay Walker at 337-967-0139.

Tractor Shows

The International Harvester Collectors of Louisiana, Chapter #31 will hold its Annual Antique Tractor, Engine & Equipment Show at the Washington Parish Fairgrounds in Franklinton April 30 & May 1 from 8 a.m. until dark.

Setup on April 29. IHC items will be featured but all makes are welcome.

For more information, call 985-732-3950 or e-mail bhbanks@bellsouth.net.

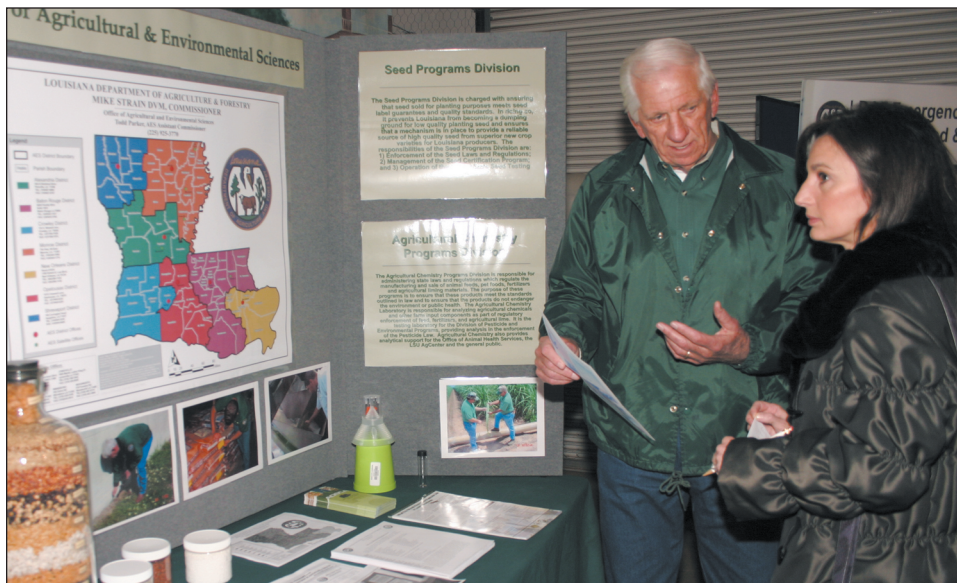
Agritourism

Growing Green, Making More Money at you Farm Business Agritourism Workshop will be held April 10 at the Lazy Acres Plantation, 596 Lazy Acres Road in Chunky, Miss. at 8 a.m.

Jane Eckert of Eckert AgriMarketing is the featured speaker. \$15 admission, lunch provided. Registration deadline is March 31.

For more information, call Jo Lynn Mitchell at 601-606-0762.

LDAF 2010 Ag Outreach draws to a close



Commissioner Mike Strain hosted nine Ag Outreach 2010 sessions across Louisiana in 19 days. Agricultural Environmental Specialist Manager Louis Leonards chats with horse breeder Leigh Lepinski of Shreveport (top left). Strain recognizes USA Rice Federation Scholarship winner Daniel McFarland at the Haughton open house (above). Livestock Brand Commission Inspector Scotty Hill and Poultry and Egg Programs Supervisor Dudley Fulton explain some of the functions of the Animal Health and Food Safety office (left). Strain addresses open house attendees at the Ag Outreach in Thibodaux.

Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., says he was very pleased with the turnout at the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Ag Outreach 2010 open houses.

"We had nine Ag Outreach sessions in Monroe, Haughton, Welsh, Thibodaux, Alexandria, Hammond, Opelousas, Metairie and Baton Rouge and the response was great," Strain said. "The public is interested in the mission of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) and we welcome their questions and input."

Strain said the open houses, dubbed Ag Outreach 2010, were designed to educate the public and decision makers on the needs of agriculture and rural economic development and how the LDAF can play a role in addressing those needs.

"Louisiana agriculture and forestry combined is a \$30 billion a year business and considered one of the largest industries in the state," Strain said. "We must be poised to take advantage of the demand for food and fiber that could double in the next 30 years. Louisiana has the resources in land and water to be at the forefront of the upcoming agricultural boom."

Visual displays from each of the LDAF offices were set up at the meeting places and experts from each division were on hand to answer the public's questions, Strain said.

"The LDAF is charged not only with protecting the state's



agricultural and forestry sector, but also a whole slate of consumer interests," Strain said. "We have 34 weights and measures inspectors that check every one of the 64,000 retail gas pumps to make sure consumers are getting what they pay for."

"We also check the accuracy of every commercial scale

and grocery scanner in our supermarkets that add up your food bill. We regulate the pesticide and structural pest control industries."

At the Ag Outreach session in Haughton, Skip Grillo, a logger from Springhill, asked Strain about improving marketing in the forestry sector.

"Right now, wood products are being looked at for use in the bio-fuels market," Strain said. "We're a green state. We're producing agricultural and forestry products throughout the year and it will be extremely important to pursue economic development for our timber landowners and loggers in the renewable energy field."

Leigh Lepinski, a quarterhorse and thoroughbred breeder from Shreveport was inquiring about fertilizing her equine pastures and received the information she needed at the open house.

Strain took the opportunity to recognize Daniel McFarland, an 11th grader from Caddo Parish Magnet High School.

McFarland, 17, was the recipient of the 2009 USA Rice Federation Scholarship grand prize. McFarland, of Keithville, earned a \$4,000 scholarship for his "Rice... Anytime, Anyone, Anywhere" project.

"I'm glad I won't be around in 30 years or so when Daniel runs for Commissioner of Agriculture," Strain quipped.